

SOUTHWEST ALASKA
TRANSPORTATION PLAN

Preliminary Environmental Issues Identification
Technical Memorandum

prepared for the

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December 1997



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PURPOSE

The purpose of this memorandum is to identify important environmental issues and constraints that may affect the implementation of transportation alternatives under consideration in the Southwest Alaska Transportation Plan. The analysis focuses on the identification of important environmental resources, known sensitive areas, and environmental issues. For the most part, the implications of these issues cannot be determined until alternatives have been developed. This memo will be used during alternatives evaluation to help determine the implications that the identified environmental resources, sensitive areas, and issues will have on constraining development of the alternatives.

It is important to note that this technical memorandum was conducted as a desktop exercise and is not a substitute for issue identification which will be accomplished through the public and agency involvement program for the plan. The purpose is to identify those areas within the region which are already experiencing impacts or are particularly sensitive to impacts. Transportation alternatives that exacerbate impacts in areas already experiencing impacts, or which introduce new impacts to the areas identified in this memorandum are likely to be examined with scrutiny from regulatory agencies and the public.

METHODOLOGY

The approach used in identifying environmental issues and constraints relied on a review of existing planning efforts conducted by the Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation, Alaska Department of Fish and Game, Alaska Coastal Management Program, Alaska Department of Community and Regional Affairs, Alaska Department of Natural Resources and others in Southwest Alaska. Coastal Management Plans, recent projects requiring National Environmental Policy Act documentation, National Park Service and Fish and Wildlife Management Plans, and Community Comprehensive Plans were reviewed to identify important environmental resources, known sensitive areas, and environmental issues. The following sources of information were used.

Coastal Management Plans. Coastal Management programs in Alaska include a resource inventory which describes the coastal habitats, major cultural resources, predominant land and water uses, major land and resource ownership and management responsibilities, and major historic, prehistoric, and archaeological resources. Also pertinent to the Southwest Alaska transportation planning effort is the discussion of transportation needs, objectives, and goals. Enforceable policies, required of the coastal management programs, also cover infrastructure development and could have an effect on transportation alternatives. Information was acquired from Coastal Management Plans for Aleutians West Coastal Resource Service Area, Aleutians East Coastal Resource Service Area, Lake and Peninsula Borough, Kodiak Island Borough, Bristol Bay Borough, St. Paul, and Cenaliuriiit.

National Environmental Policy Act Documents (NEPA). Projects that require compliance with NEPA often result in documents that include background discussion of the affected area summarized by topics. As such, NEPA-based documents often provide an excellent source of documentation of environmentally sensitive areas and related potential environmental information. Several NEPA-based documents from projects in Southwest Alaska provide important information on the environmental conditions, issues, constraints, and land management pertinent to development of transportation alternatives. The most relevant NEPA documents include Environmental Impact Statements for the Alaska Maritime National Wildlife Refuge, Alaska Peninsula National Wildlife Refuge, Becharof National Wildlife Refuge, Izembek National Wildlife Refuge, Kodiak National Wildlife Refuge, and Togiak National Wildlife Refuge.

Land Management Plans. Land Management Plans were reviewed for environmental issues relating to transportation development. These plans provide important information, particularly as a supplement to Coastal Management documents. Conservation Plans for the Alaska Maritime National Wildlife Refuge, Alaska Peninsula National Wildlife Refuge, Aniakchak National Monument and Preserve, Becharof National Wildlife Refuge, Fort Abercrombie State Historic Park, Izembek National Wildlife Refuge, Katmai National Park and Preserve, Kodiak National Wildlife Refuge, Lake Clark National Park and Preserve, Pasagshak River State Recreation Site, Togiak National Wildlife Refuge, and Wood–Tikchik State Park were collected and reviewed.

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES AND CONSTRAINTS

AIR QUALITY

The Environmental Protection Agency has established National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) for several pollutants. Known as “criteria pollutants,” these are pollutants that can harm human health. Criteria pollutants with NAAQS include carbon monoxide (CO), small particulate matter (PM10), sulfur dioxide (SO₂), nitrogen dioxide (NO₂), ozone (O₃), and lead (Pb). Where transportation alternatives are located in non-attainment areas or where investments could cause violations of one or more of the NAAQS, a quantitative analysis of the impacts is required, usually as part of the environmental process.

With only a few localized exceptions, air quality in Southwest Alaska is considered good to excellent. Frequent winds and storm systems provide sufficient air exchange to make most site-specific air quality problems temporary. Commercial fishing and seafood processing often present air quality concerns in Southwest Alaska and the increased use of local harbors by a variety of fishing vessels does cause occasional site-specific air contamination in the harbor areas. Site-specific air quality problems have also been identified at some of the Southwest Alaska fish processing plants. Air quality problems also exist in Southwest communities due to unpaved roads which result in particulate concentration problems in the air. Transportation alternatives that exacerbate air quality conditions in these areas will likely face increased concerns of air quality degradation.

NOISE

Many types of transportation investments have the potential to increase noise and vibration levels. Sources of transportation noise typically include vehicle operating noise whether from cars, trucks, busses, airplanes, or marine vessels. Transportation noise may affect a community in two ways, (1) the noise may be frequent enough and loud enough to increase the cumulative noise considerably, or (2) the noise may last only a short duration which does not increase the overall noise level considerably but which may still be an impact. The most prominent sources of noise in Southwest Alaska come from marine vessels and airplanes. In many Southwest Alaska communities harbor facilities have been developed close to town and are often located in the heart of the developed area. Marine traffic, which often includes large ocean-going vessels, is concentrated at these locations causing noise impacts. Noise impacts are exacerbated by topography in many locations, where mountainous terrain forms natural amphitheatres or walls which bounce the sound back into the community. Airstrips and seaplane landing areas close to a community also cause noise impacts, particularly where approach areas take planes over the community. Noise will also likely be an issue where it has the ability to affect wildlife when transportation alternatives come in close proximity to important habitat areas such as the alternatives to improve access between King Cove and Cold Bay through the Izembek National Wildlife Refuge.

WATER QUALITY

Water quality can typically be affected by transportation alternatives in one of three ways: (1) dredging, discharging fill material, or introducing pollutants into the water; (2) altering surface

drainage patterns or increasing runoff; or (3) affecting the water table by dewatering or contaminating the ground water. Wastewater from maintenance facilities or storm water runoff can be a source of contamination. A National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System permit may be required under the Clean Water Act, if wastewater is discharged into a storm water system. Dredging or discharging of fill material into waters of the United States, including wetlands, must comply with Section 404 of the Clean Water Act and Section 10 of the Rivers and Harbors Act.

Several Southwest Alaska communities have identifiable water quality issues. Marine waters near communities are influenced by discharges of sewage effluent, process waters and wastes from seafood operations, oily water discharges from bilge pumping, and spills of petroleum products associated with the transportation, storage, and distribution of gasoline, fuel, oil, diesel, and lubricants. High levels of rainfall generally provide communities with an adequate supply of good water. However, water quality is considered to be a major issue by local residents. The following table lists the water quality limited waterbodies for Southwest Alaska that the Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) submitted to the Environmental Protection Agency in its 1996 Section 305(b) and Section 303(d) submittal. Water quality concerns and DEC regulations could affect the development of transportation improvements that have the potential to further impact these water bodies.

1996 Impaired Waterbodies List, Southwest Alaska

| Waterbody | Location | Pollutant | Source |
|-----------------------------|-----------------|--|--------------------------|
| Eskimo Creek | King Salmon | Petroleum, Hydrocarbons, Metals, Pesticides, Trichloroethylene | Landfill, Fuel Storage |
| Iliuliuk Bay/Harbor | Dutch Harbor | Petroleum Products | Urban Runoff |
| King Cove | King Cove | Seafood Residue | Seafood Processing/Waste |
| King Salmon Creek | King Salmon | Petroleum Hydrocarbons, Metals, Pesticides | Landfill, Fuel Storage |
| Naknek River | King Salmon | Petroleum Hydrocarbons, Metal | Landfill, Fuel Storage |
| Red Fox Creek | King Salmon | Petroleum Hydrocarbons, Metals | Landfill, Fuel Storage |
| Red Lake – Anton Road Ponds | Kodiak | Debris, Metals, Petroleum Products | Urban Runoff |
| Udagak Bay | Unalaska Island | Settlable Solids | Seafood Processing |

Source: Section 305(b) and Section 303(d) Submittal, Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation

Other specific water quality issues were identified through a search of the Coastal Management Programs, National Wildlife Refuge and National Park Service Documents, and the Cumulative Impacts in Alaska Report. Some of the waterbodies listed have been affected in the past, raising public or agency concerns, others are watersheds specifically identified by the plans as needing special consideration. Transportation alternatives that affect these waterbodies will likely face additional scrutiny.

*Identified Water Quality Issues
Southwest Alaska Coastal Management Plans*

| Coastal District | Waterbody | Water Quality Issues |
|-------------------------|---------------------------|---|
| Adak | Eskimo Creek | Septic and hydrocarbons |
| Akutan | Akutan Harbor | Processing plants, new 800' – 1000' sheetpile bulkhead |
| King Cove | Harbor, Bay, Popof Strait | Waste accumulation |
| Dillingham area | Banks, Streams, Wetlands | Docks and facilities change bank stabilization/erosion, road crossings from new roads |
| Dutch Harbor | Dutch Harbor | Seafood processing, seafood waste discharge, oil wastes from buried storage tanks |
| Inner Unalaska | Unalaska Harbor | Harbor development, fish processing, sediment deposition from vessel washing |
| Kodiak | Viewshed | Logging and recreation development |
| South Unalaska | Unalaska Bay | Seafood processing and discharge, fills, and docks |
| Unalaska | Unalaska Bay | Cannery pollution, commercial fisheries, fishing vessel and processing discharge |

Source: HDR Alaska, Inc. Cumulative Impacts in Alaska. June 1995

An issue of concern for several communities in Southwest Alaska is the transportation and storage of hazardous materials, particularly petroleum products. Timing and shipment information regarding these shipments may not always reach the communities and residents have expressed concern about the ability of shippers to respond to an accident in a timely and effective manner.

Non-point source pollution is also a relevant transportation issue. The 1990 US Coastal Zone Reauthorization Amendments (Section 6217) and the Alaska Department of Conservation Alaska Non-Point Source Strategy, currently under development, address non-point source pollution and should be cited particularly for areas not within Coastal Boundaries. Based on

these requirements, the DOT&PF has adopted a Best Management Practices (BMPs) manual to address non-point source pollution, which is modeled on standards established by the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials. Any transportation project receiving Federal Highway Administration funds must now meet these non-point source guidelines. Moreover, the Alaska Harbormasters are developing a set of BMPs in conjunction with the regulatory agencies to address runoff, drainage, and water quality concerns at boat harbors.

WETLANDS

Wetlands are areas that are inundated or saturated by surface or ground water for a sufficient amount of time to support a prevalence of vegetation suited to surviving in saturated soil conditions. Executive Order 11990, "Protection of Wetlands" requires federal agencies to avoid direct or indirect support of projects that involve new construction in wetlands when there is a practicable alternative. Moreover, for transportation investments that could affect a wetland, U.S. DOT Order 56601.1A, "Preservation of the Nation's Wetlands," requires that a wetlands analysis be performed. If the analysis indicates a significant impact on wetlands an environmental impact statement is required. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (COE) has primary responsibility for regulation of wetlands. Proposals for fill placement in wetlands require authorization from the COE, with concurrence of other federal agencies such as the Fish and Wildlife Service and the Environmental Protection Agency.

Wetland areas are found in many areas throughout Southwest Alaska and are too numerous to identify. Every Coastal Management Plan includes wetlands as a habitat protection issue. To better gauge specific wetlands from a transportation alternative it will be necessary to consult the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service National Wetland Inventory Maps or regional or site-specific wetlands mapping.

PROTECTED SPECIES

Endangered Species are protected by the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (16 U.S.C. 1531). Section 7 of the Act requires consultation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) or National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) to ensure that projects do not jeopardize the continued existence of any listed species or result in the destruction or adverse modification of critical habitat. In general, marine species are under the jurisdiction of the NMFS and all other species are under jurisdiction of the United States Fish Wildlife Service. The protection afforded to Protected Species or their habitat can constrain transportation projects and is a consideration in the project development phase.

There are several categories of protected species relevant to Southwest Alaska. An "endangered species" is defined as one that is in danger of extinction throughout all or a significant portion of its range. A "threatened species" is defined as one that is likely to become an endangered species within the foreseeable future throughout all or a significant portion of its range. "Candidate species" are those species for which the USFWS has sufficient information on the species biological vulnerability and threats, to support issuance of a proposed rule to list the species under the Endangered Species Act. "Species of concern" refers to species for which a listing of threatened or endangered may be appropriate but which the USFWS has insufficient information to support their listing.

Protected species which could inhabit the Southwest Alaska Region are identified from a review of the Comprehensive Planning documents and the endangered, threatened and candidate species lists maintained by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the National Marine Fisheries Service.

Protected Species

| Status | Species |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| Federally Listed Threatened Species | Aleutian Canada Goose, Steller Sea Lion, Spectaled Eider, Steller's Eider (Proposed) |
| USFWS Species of Concern | Beluga Whale, Harbor Seal, , Northern Fur Seal, Blackpoll Warbler, Gray-Cheeked Thrush, Northern Goshawk, Olive-Sided Flycatcher, Townsend's Warbler |
| Federally Listed Endangered Species | Blue Whale, Eskimo Curlew, Humpback Whale, Sei Whale, Finback Whale, Northern Right Whale, Sperm Whale, Short-tailed Albatross, Chinese Egret, Aleutian Shield Fern, American Peregrine Falcon, Short-Tailed Albatross |
| Candidate Species | None |

Source: AKFG, USFWS, NOAA, USBLM, USFS 1997

NATURAL HAZARDS

Natural hazards can limit and constrain the location and design of transportation improvements. Development of transportation alternatives in Southwest Alaska must consider several natural hazards. All of Southwest Alaska is subject to earthquakes and associated Tsunamis, slope failure, mass wasting, sea ice, storm surges, flooding, and avalanches. Due to the Aleutian Trench, the Aleutian Islands arc system is the most seismically active part of Alaska. Southwest Alaska is home to approximately 38 historically active volcanoes. These volcanoes are listed as such primarily because they all have erupted within the last ten thousand years and may erupt in the future. In addition to location and design considerations, volcanic eruptions interfere with air and surface transportation operations because of ash and particulate intake into internal combustion engines.

*Southwest Alaska
Historically Active Volcanic Peaks*

| Volcano | Location | Volcano | Location |
|-----------------------------|------------------------|----------------|-----------------------|
| Akutan | Akutan Island | Kiska | Rat Islands |
| Amukta | Islands of Four Mtns. | Korovin | Atka Island |
| Aniakchak | Aniakchak Nat'l Mon. | Little Sitkin | Rat Islands |
| Augustine | Augustine Island | Mageik | Katmai National Park |
| Bogoslof | Fox Islands | Makushin | Unalaska Island |
| Carlisle | Islands of Four Mtns. | Martin | Katmai National Park |
| Cerberus (Semisopochnoi) | Rat Islands | Novarupta | Katmai National Park |
| Chiginagak | Alaska Peninsula | Okmok | Umnak Island |
| Cleveland | Islands of Four Mtns. | Pavlof | Alaska Peninsula |
| Dutton | Alaska Peninsula | Peulik | Alaska Peninsula |
| Fisher | Alaska Peninsula | Seguam | Andreanof Islands |
| Gareloi | Andreanof Islands | Shishaldin | Unimak Island |
| Great Sitkin | Andreanof Islands | Tanaga | Andreanof Islands |
| Iliamna | Lake Clark Nat'l. Park | Trident | Katmai National Park |
| Isanotski | Unimak Island | Ukinrek | Alaska Peninsula |
| Kagamil | Islands of Four Mtns. | Veniaminof | Alaska Peninsula |
| Kanaga | Andreanof Islands | Vsevidof | Umnak Island |
| Kasatochi | Andreanof Islands | Westdahl | Alaska Peninsula |
| Katmai | Katmai National Park | Yunaska | Islands of Four Mtns. |

Source: Quick Reference to Alaska's Active Volcanoes and Listing of Historical eruptions. USGS, Alaska Volcano Observatory. 1995.

The following table lists natural hazards for communities within the Southwest Alaska Region. These hazards were identified through a review of National Wildlife Refuge documents, Coastal Management Programs, and Environmental Impact Statements.

Identified Natural Hazards

| Coastal District | Hazards |
|----------------------------|--|
| Aleutians East | Seismic Activity and Volcanic Eruptions with associated Tsunamis, Ground Motion, Landslides, Ash Falls |
| Aleutians West | Seismic Activity and Volcanic Eruptions with associated Tsunamis, Ground Motion, Landslides, Ash Falls |
| Becharof | Seismic Activity and Volcanic Eruptions with associated Tsunamis, Ash Falls, Flooding |
| Bristol Bay | Seismic Activity, Volcanic Activity, Tsunami, Sea Ice, Storm Surges, Slope Failure, Flooding, Erosion |
| Cenaliurrit District | Seismic Activity, Volcanic Eruptions, Flooding, Erosion, Shorefast Ice, Permafrost |
| Kodiak Archipelago | Seismic Activity and Volcanic Eruptions with associated Tsunamis, Ground Motion, Landslides, Ash Falls, Flooding, Avalanches, Coastal Erosion, Wind Damage, Mass Wasting |
| Lake and Peninsula Borough | Seismic Activity And Volcanic Eruptions with associated Tsunamis, Ground Motion, Landslides, Ash Falls |
| St. Paul | Volcanic Activity, Seismic Activity, Erosion, Tsunamis, Ground Motion, Landslides, Ash Falls |

RADIOLOGICAL CONTAMINATION

Another potential hazard to transportation alternatives results from the Vela Uniform Program which was conducted as part of a research and development program to improve the capability of detecting, monitoring, and identifying underground nuclear explosions. Amchitka Island was one of several locations involved in the program. Project Long Shot test was conducted in October 1965 at a depth of 2,300 feet. The test was designed to determine the behavior and characteristics of seismic signals generated by nuclear explosions. Two other nuclear detonations, not part of the Vela Uniform Program, Project Milrow, a high-yield seismic calibration test conducted in October 1969 at a depth of 4,000 feet, and Project Cannikan, a test of a proposed warhead for the Spartan missile, were conducted in November 1971 at a depth of 5,875 feet. Of the three tests, only Project Long Shot produced detectable surface radiological contamination. Results from a study conducted by the U.S. Department of Energy last year appear to confirm that no radiation is "leaking" following the three underground nuclear weapons tests. Recent studies, however, have disputed this claim.

LAND MANAGEMENT

Many sensitive areas and environmental resources in Southwest Alaska are protected by special land management status under public ownership. In some cases the protections are mandated by federal law, in others the protection is prescribed by land management plans covering the sensitive area. It is likely that transportation alternatives will face constraints and additional scrutiny if they impact specially managed areas. In some areas, transportation improvements are precluded. This section identifies sensitive areas in Southwest Alaska that are managed to protect the environmental resources and sensitive aspects that could affect development of transportation alternatives.

National Parks and Monuments. National parks and monuments are managed by the National Park Service. They are protected in statute and by land management plans governing their administration. In general, national parks and monuments are managed to protect the values for which they were established. Management plans covering the areas should be consulted for specific policies. National preserves are managed as a unit of the National Park System in the same manner as a national park except regarding subsistence hunting. The following national parks and monuments were identified in Southwest Alaska.

These parks and monuments were established by the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act (ANILCA). Title XI of ANILCA governs the routing of transportation systems in conservation system units including these national parks and monuments. The conservation system units in Southwest Alaska on shown on the map on the following page.

National Parks and Monuments, Southwest Alaska

Aniakchak National Monument and Preserve

Katmai National Park and Preserve

Lake Clark National Park and Preserve

Source: DeLorme Mapping. Alaska Atlas & Gazetteer. 1992

Federal Conservation System Units



Saint Paul
Pribilof Islands
 Saint George

Southwest Alaska Transportation Plan



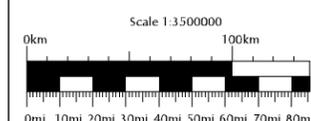
File: swstat.aml
 Date: 10/22/97
 By: PKW

Legend

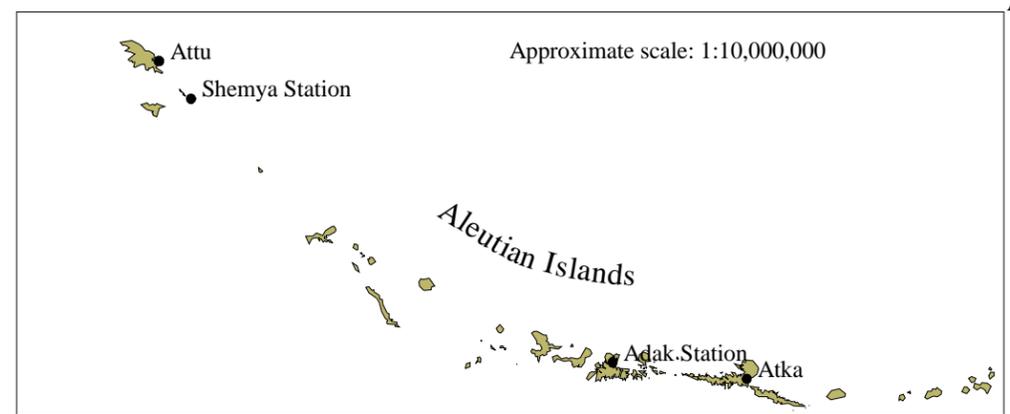
- Conservation System Units*
- Aniakchak NM&P
 - Alaska Maritime NWR
 - Alaska Peninsula NWR
 - Izembek NWR
 - Kenai NWR
 - Kodiak NWR
 - Togiak NWR
 - Katmai NP&P
 - Becharof NWR
 - Lake Clark NP&P



Data Sources:
 Alaska Department of Natural Resources
 Alaska Department of Transportation
 Federal Aviation Administration



Projection: Albers
 Units: Meters
 Spheroid: Clarke1866
 1st standard parallel: 55 0 0.0
 2nd standard parallel: 65 0 0.0
 central meridian: -154 0 0.0
 latitude of projection's origin: 50 0 0.0



State Parks and Recreation Areas. State parks are managed by the Alaska Department of Natural Resources, Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation. The following state parks and recreation areas are located in Southwest Alaska. State parks are protected by state statute and area-specific management plans. Parks are also subject to Section 4(f) of the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT).

Identified State Parks, Southwest Alaska

| State Park | Nearest Community |
|---------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Buskin River State Recreation Site | Kodiak |
| Fort Abercrombie State Historic Park | Kodiak |
| Pasagshak River State Recreation Site | Kodiak |
| Shuyak Island State Park | Kodiak |
| Wood–Tikchik State Park | Dillingham |

Source: AK DNR. Catalog of the Alaska State Park System

The areas noted below were identified using information from the Alaska Department of Natural Resources Parks and Recreation Division and the Alaska Almanac as developed parks and recreation sites and are managed as such. These areas have special land management proscriptions and are also subject to Section 4(f) of the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) Act.

Identified Developed Recreation Areas

| Recreation Areas | Location |
|--------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Miller Bay, Miller Point | Fort Abercrombie State Historic Park |
| Newhalen River | Lake Clark National Park and Preserve |
| Pasagshak Bay | Pasagshak State Recreation Site |
| Wood River | Wood–Tikchik State Park |

Source: Alaska Department of Natural Resources. Alaska Northwest Books. The Alaska Almanac. 1993

Wildlife Refuges. The following areas have been set aside as having special wildlife habitat values. State wildlife refuges are protected by state statute and are managed by the Alaska Department of Fish and Game. National refuges are part of the National Wildlife Refuge System and are managed by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Wildlife refuges are typically managed to preserve the wildlife and habitat resources among other values for which they were established. Refuge specific management plans should be consulted for further information.

Wildlife refuges are subject to Section 4(f) of the U.S. Department of Transportation Act and Federal Refuges are subject to Title XI of ANILCA.

Southwest Alaska Federal Wildlife Refuges

| Refuge | Location |
|---|---|
| Alaska Maritime National Wildlife Refuge | Aleutian Islands and islands offshore of the Alaska Peninsula |
| Alaska Peninsula National Wildlife Refuge | Southwest Alaska Peninsula |
| Becharof National Wildlife Refuge | Alaska Peninsula |
| Izembek National Wildlife Refuge | Cold Bay |
| Kodiak National Wildlife Refuge | Kodiak Archipelago |
| Togiak National Wildlife Refuge | Togiak |

Source: DeLorme Mapping. Alaska Atlas & Gazetteer. 1992

Southwest Alaska State Wildlife Refuges and Sanctuaries

| Refuge/Sanctuary | Location |
|------------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Cape Newenham State Refuge | Togiak National Wildlife Refuge |
| Izembek State Refuge | Izembek National Wildlife Range |
| McNeil State Game Sanctuary | Kamishak Bay |
| Walrus Island State Game Sanctuary | Togiak National Wildlife Refuge |

Source: AK DFG. State of Alaska Refuges, Critical Habitat Areas and Sanctuaries. March 1991

Wilderness Areas. Wilderness areas in Southwest Alaska were established by ANILCA in accordance with the purposes of the Wilderness Act of 1964. Wilderness areas are managed for the preservation of wilderness character, that is, “to preserve the area such that the earth and its community of life are untrammelled by man, where man himself is a visitor who does not remain.” Generally roads and motorized access are not allowed except for fixed-wing airplanes, motorboats, and snowmachines. Access is provided for in ANILCA sections 811, 1010, 1110, 1111, 1310, 1315(b), and 1323. Wilderness areas are considered conservation system units and are subject to Title XI of ANILCA.

Southwest Alaska Wilderness Areas

| Wilderness Area | Location |
|-----------------------------|---|
| Aleutian Islands Wilderness | Alaska Maritime National Wildlife Refuge |
| Becharof Wilderness | Becharof National Wildlife Refuge |
| Bogoslof Wilderness | Alaska Maritime National Wildlife Refuge |
| Chignik Wilderness | Alaska Peninsula National Wildlife Refuge |
| Izembek Wilderness | Izembek National Wildlife Refuge |
| Katmai Wilderness Park | Katmai National Park |
| Kodiak Wilderness | Kodiak National Wildlife Refuge |
| Pavlof Wilderness | Alaska Peninsula National Wildlife Refuge |
| Semidi Wilderness | Alaska Maritime National Wildlife Refuge |
| Simeonof Wilderness | Alaska Maritime National Wildlife Refuge |
| Togiak Wilderness | Togiak National Wildlife Refuge |
| Ugashik Wilderness | Alaska Peninsula National Wildlife Refuge |
| Unimak Wilderness | Alaska Maritime National Wildlife Refuge |

State Critical Habitat Areas. Southwest Alaska contains a number of State Critical Habitat Areas. These areas have been designated as such to provide a level of management and protection commensurate with the unique fish and wildlife values for these areas. The following table lists the current Southwest Alaska State Critical Habitat Areas.

Southwest Alaska State Critical Habitat Areas

| |
|--|
| Cinder River State Critical Habitat Area |
| Egegik State Critical Habitat Area |
| Pilot Point State Critical Habitat Area |
| Port Heiden State Critical Habitat Area |
| Port Moller State Critical Habitat Area |
| Tugidak Island State Critical Habitat Area |

Source: AK DFG. State of Alaska Refuges, Critical Habitat Areas and Sanctuaries. March 1991

Wild, Scenic, and Recreational Rivers. The Wild and Scenic Rivers Act of 1968 provides a means for identifying and protecting outstandingly remarkable scenic, recreation, geologic, fish and wildlife, historic, cultural, ecological, and other values of the nations rivers. The intent of the Act is to preserve the free-flowing condition of the rivers and the characteristics of the river’s immediate environment. As such, depending on the classification of the river, transportation alternatives could be constrained by the Act.

There are three classes of rivers established by the Act, “wild,” “scenic,” and “recreational.” The previous definitions are used by the Act to specify the classification of rivers subject to the Act. Wild rivers are described as “Those rivers or sections of rivers that are free of impoundments and generally inaccessible except by trail, with watersheds or shorelines essentially primitive...” Scenic rivers are “those rivers or section of rivers that are free of impoundments, with shorelines or watersheds still largely primitive and shorelines largely undeveloped, but accessible in places by roads.” Scenic rivers are “those rivers or sections of rivers that are readily accessible by road or railroad, that may have some development along their shorelines, and that may have undergone some impoundment or diversion in the past.” The following table lists Southwest Alaska rivers designated under the National Wild and Scenic Rivers Act.

Southwest Alaska Wild, Scenic, and Recreational Rivers

| River | Location |
|----------------------------|--|
| Alagnak River | Katmai National Park |
| Albert Johnson Creek | Aniakchak National Monument and Preserve |
| Aniakchak River | Aniakchak National Monument and Preserve |
| Chilikadrotna River | Lake Clark National Park and Preserve |
| Hidden Creek | Aniakchak National Monument and Preserve |
| Mulchatna River | Lake Clark National Park and Preserve |
| Mystery Creek | Aniakchak National Monument and Preserve |
| North Fork Aniakchak River | Aniakchak National Monument and Preserve |
| Tliikakila River | Lake Clark National Park and Preserve |

Source: United States Department of the Interior. ANILCA. 1983

Research Natural Areas. Research Natural Areas are established to preserve areas of ecological importance in their natural condition for the purposes of research, monitoring, education, and/or to maintain natural diversity. Unless otherwise specified in the management plan, roads are not allowed unless they contribute to the objectives or protection of the area. The following research natural areas are described by the plan.

*Alaska Department of Fish and Game
Proposed Research Natural Areas*

| Location | Proposed Research Natural Areas |
|------------------------|--|
| Aleutians East Borough | Canoe Bay, Hoodo Lake, Herendeen Bay, Sapsuk River, Sandy River, Bear Lake |

Source: Alaska Coastal Management Program. Aleutians East Coastal Resource Service Area. July 1985

Subsistence. Subsistence hunting and fishing activities are important to residents of Southwest Alaska. Subsistence management and uses on federal lands are subject to Title VIII of ANILCA. In particular, Section 810 describes management of land uses that could restrict subsistence uses. An evaluation (810 evaluation) is required by the head of the federal agency having primary jurisdiction over the land proposed for use to determine the affects on subsistence resources. State management of substance activities is currently being debated. At this time it is unclear as to what level of federal and state agencies involvement will be in the regulation of subsistence activities.

A review of the plans found the following main types of issues regarding transportation's affects on subsistence resources in Southwest Alaska.

- Human activity, particularly boating and harbor operations, impacts subsistence marine resources.
- Competition among commercial, sport, and subsistence use of the resources is often caused by improved access.
- Improved accessibility puts increased pressure on subsistence resource populations. That is, the indirect impact of increased competition for fish and game resources due to better access and more people.
- The direct impact of displacing animal or fish populations, affecting their habitat, or impacting sites customarily used for harvesting.

Identified Subsistence Use Areas

| Coastal District | Subsistence Use Areas |
|-------------------------|--|
| Atka | Nazan Bay/Uyak Island, Unnamed, Unnamed, Old Harbor, Cape Korovin, Head of Korovin Bay, Martin Harbor, Sarana Cove, Egg Bay, Salt Reef, Deep Bay, Bluefox Bay, Unnamed, Beaver Bay, Kobakof Bay, Sagchudak Island, Sadatanak Island, Unnamed, Vasilief Islands, Vasilief Bay, Cape Utalug to Emily, Eddy Point, West Amlia Pass, Cape Utes |

| Coastal District | Subsistence Use Areas |
|----------------------------|---|
| Chignik | Chignik Lake, Chignik Lagoon, Chignik Bay, Meshik River, Black Lake drainage, Castle Bay, Ivanof Bay, Mud Bay |
| Egegik | Egegik Rapids, Becharof Lake, Naknek River, Kejulik, Lake near Whale Mountain, King Salmon River, Kejulik River Valley, South Katmai Bay |
| Izembek | Coastline and inland of Izembek Lagoon and Kinzarof Lagoon, Big Lagoon, Grant Point, Applegate Cove |
| Kodiak Island (Karluk) | From Inner Seal Rock to mouth of Karluk River to Harvester Island and all of the coast areas of Uyak and Spiridon Bays, extending to Cape Kuliuk |
| Kodiak Island (Larsen Bay) | From mouth of Karluk River to Harvester Island and Uyak Bay, Larsen Bay, and Spiridon Bay extending to Cape Kuliuk |
| Kodiak Island (Old Harbor) | Narrow Cape to Geese Channel and the coastal areas of Ugak Bay, Sitkalidak Strait, Kaiugnak Bay, and Kaguyak Bay. Sitkalidak Island, Twoheaded Island, and Geese Island |
| Kodiak Island (Other) | South Afognak Island, Tonki Bay, Marmot Strait, Izhut Bay, Marmot Bay, Kizhuyak Bay, Kupreanof Strait, Viekoda Bay, Uganik Passage, Uganik Bay, Raspberry Strait, Malina Bay, and Paramanof Bay. Portions of Spruce, Whale, Raspberry, Uganik Islands |
| Kodiak Island (Akhioik) | Alitak Bay from Cape Alitak to Humpy Cove to the south from Stockholm Point to the entrance of Olga Bay |
| Naknek | Naknek River, Big Creek, Kejulik River, Becharof Lake, King Salmon Creek, King Salmon River |
| Nikolski | Nikolski Offshore, Pancake Rocks, Adugak Island, Nikolski Subsistence Area |
| Pavlof | Herendeen Bay, Port Moller Bay, Canoe Bay, Pavlof Bay, Balboa Bay, Bechevin Bay, Unimak Island, Izembek Refuge, Thinpoint Lake, Traders Mountain, Chinaman Lagoon, Jackson Lagoon, Mortensen Lagoon, Nurse Lagoon, Russell Creek, Trout Creek, Delta Creek, Canoe River |
| St. Paul | St. Paul Island, Walrus Island, Otter Island |
| Togiak | Nushagak Bay, Nushagak River, Togiak Lake, Igushik River, Kulukak Bay, Togiak Bay, Aleknagik, Nichols Spit, Protection Point, Tongue Point, Estus Point, Asigyukpak Spit, Nanvak Bay, Chagvan Bay, Carter Bay, Goodnews Bay, Platinum, Quinhagak, Kanektok River, Arolik River, Kisaralik River, Osviak Bay, Jacksmith Bay, Kagati Lake |
| Ugashik | Ugashik Lakes, Dog Salmon River, Mother Goose Lake |

| Coastal District | Subsistence Use Areas |
|------------------|---|
| Unalaska | Priest Rock, Constantine Bay, Foot of Split Top, Iliuliuk Bay, West Side Captain's Bay, Devilfish Point/Hog Island, Nateekin, Wide Bay/Broad Bay, Eider Point, Chernofski Harbor, Beaver Inlet, Kalekta Bay |

Coastal Management. Coastal Management Plans have been developed for nearly all of Southwest Alaska. The state standards for transportation and utilities (6 AAC 80.080) require that transportation routes and facilities be sited inland from beaches and shorelines unless the route or facility is water-dependent or no feasible and prudent inland alternative exists to meet the public need for the project. In addition, the standards require that transportation routes and facilities in the coastal area be sited, designed, and constructed so as to be compatible with local district programs. The following table lists the coastal management districts in Southwest Alaska.

Southwest Alaska Coastal Management Districts

| |
|--------------------|
| Aleutians West |
| Aleutians East |
| Bristol Bay |
| Cenaliulriit |
| Kodiak Island |
| Lake and Peninsula |
| St. Paul |

District coastal management programs also identify and provide special protection to sensitive areas and environmental resources. "Area Meriting Special Attention" (AMSA) is an official designation provided to areas important to subsistence, areas with special scientific values or opportunities, or areas with potential for estuarine or marine sanctuaries. Other sensitive areas not formally designated as AMSA are also identified in the plans and often have particular importance to the communities. A review of the coastal management programs identified the following special use areas for Southwest Alaska.

Identified Special Use Areas

| Location | Special Use Areas | Primary Value |
|--|---|---|
| Bechevin Bay | Bechevin Bay and North Morzhovoi Bay | Estuarine Habitat |
| Bristol Bay (proposed AMSA) | Togiak Bay past Hagemeister Island to Kulukak Bay, High Island, Summit Island, Crooked Island, Round Island | Habitat, Subsistence |
| Bristol Bay AMSA | Nushagak and Mulchatna Rivers Recreation Area | Habitat, Subsistence, Recreation |
| Cenaliulriit (proposed AMSA) | Nash Harbor | Seabird and Marine Mammal Habitat |
| Chernofski (proposed AMSA) | Chernofski Harbor | Habitat, Historical |
| Izembek Lagoon | Izembek Lagoon and Moffet Lagoon | Estuarine Habitat |
| Kodiak Island Borough (AMSA) | Shuyak Island, Raspberry Island, Karluk Lake and River, Womens Bay, Middle Bay | Habitat, Recreation, Economical & Residential |
| Nelson Lagoon | Nelson Lagoon | Port Moller State Critical Habitat Area |
| Pavlof/Canoe Bay | Pavlof/Canoe Bay | Marine Habitat |
| Port Moller, Herendeen Bay, Bear River | Port Moller, Herendeen Bay, Bear River | Port Moller State Critical Habitat Area |
| Unalaska Bay (proposed AMSA) | Unalaska Bay, Dutch Harbor | Subsistence, Recreation, Habitat, Historical |
| Unimak Pass | Unimak Pass | Migratory Pathways, Habitat |

SOCIAL, CULTURAL, HISTORIC ISSUES

Historic Resources. Transportation projects that affect historic or cultural sites are subject to Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act. The Act requires that federal agencies identify and assess the effects of expenditures of federal funds on historic and archaeological sites. The Act requires agencies to provide the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation an opportunity to comment on activities with the potential to impact historic properties. In addition, to the extent possible, impacts on the properties must be mitigated. Properties subject to the Act are those on or eligible for the National Register of Historic Places. State law also protects historic sites and all projects should be coordinated with the State Historic Preservation Officer. Cultural resources are also covered. The following tables lists Southwest Alaska sites recorded on the National Historic Register.

*National Historic Register
Southwest Alaska/Aleutian Islands Region*

| Location | Site |
|-----------------------------|--|
| Afognak | Nativity of Our Lord Chapel |
| Akhiok | Protection of the Theotokos Chapel |
| Akutan | St. Alexander Nevsky Chapel |
| Aleutian Islands | Temnac P-38G Lightning |
| Amaknak Island | Dutch Harbor Naval Operating Base; Fort Mears, U.S. Army |
| Amaknak Island | Sitka Spruce Plantation |
| Ananiuliak | Ananiuliak Island Archeological District |
| Aniakchak National Preserve | Aniakchak Bay Historic Landscape District |
| Atka | Atka B-24D Liberator |
| Attu Island | Attu Battlefield and U.S. Army and Navy Airfield |
| Belkofski | Holy Resurrection Church |
| Cape Adagdak | Adak Army and Naval Operating Station |
| Dillingham | Fisherman's Co-op |
| Dillingham | Pilgrim 100B Aircraft |
| Ekuk | St. Nicholas Chapel |
| Igiugig | St. Nicholas Church |
| Kanatak | Archeological Site 49 MK 10 |
| Kanatak | Archeological Site 49 AF 3 |
| Kanatak | Kukak Village Site |
| Kanatak | Takli Island Archeological District |
| Karluk | Ascension of Our Lord Chapel |
| Katmai National Park | Kaguyak Village Site |
| King Salmon | Fure's Cabin |
| Kiska Island | Japanese Occupation Site |

| Location | Site |
|-----------------------|--|
| Kodiak | AHRS Site KOD-207 |
| Kodiak | Erskine House |
| Kodiak | Holy Resurrection Church |
| Kodiak | Kodiak 011 Site |
| Kodiak | Kodiak Naval Operating Base and Fort Abercrombie |
| Kodiak Miller Point | Fort Abercrombie State Historic Site |
| Kodiak Upper Mill Bay | American Cemetery |
| Larsen Bay | KOD-171 |
| Larsen Bay | KOD-233 |
| Naknek | Brooks River Archeological District |
| Naknek | Kijik Historic District |
| Naknek | Old Savonoski Site |
| Naknek | Savonoski River Archeological District |
| Nikolski | Anangula Archeological District |
| Nikolski | St. Nicholas Church |
| Nikolski | Chaluka Site |
| Nondalton | Kijik Archeological District |
| Nondalton | St. Nicholas Chapel |
| Nushagak | Transfiguration of Our Lord Chapel |
| Old Harbor | Three Saints Site |
| Ouzinkie | Nativity of our Lord Chapel |
| Ouzinkie | Sts. Sergius and Herman of Valaam Chapel |
| Pedro Bay | St. Nicholas Chapel |
| Perryville | St. John the Theologian Church |
| Pilot Point | St. Nicholas Church |
| Port Moller | Port Moller Hot Springs Village Site |
| Sand Point | St. Nicholas Chapel |

| Location | Site |
|-------------------------|---|
| South Naknek | Elevation of Holy Cross Church |
| St. George Island | St. George the Great Martyr Orthodox Church |
| St. Paul and St. George | Fur Seals Rookeries |
| St. Paul Island | Sts. Peter and Paul Church |
| Unalaska | Church of the Holy Ascension |
| Unalaska | S.S. Northwestern Shipwreck Site |
| Umnak Island | Cape Field at Fort Glenn |

Executive Order 12898 (Environmental Justice). Executive Order 12898 applies to federal actions to address environmental justice in minority group and low income populations. This order calls for strategies to identify and address disproportionately high and adverse human health and environmental impacts on low income and minority group populations. In Southwest Alaska there is a significant minority group Alaska Native population. In addition, much of the population is economically disadvantaged. These could become factors under Executive Order 12898. The table below lists the Alaska Native population percentage and below-poverty-level percentage for Southwest Alaska communities.

Low Income and Alaska Native Populations

| Location | % Alaska Native | % Below Poverty Level |
|-----------------|------------------------|------------------------------|
| Adak Island | 1.2% | 2.0% |
| Akhiok | 93.5% | 2.4% |
| Akutan | 13.6% | 16.6% |
| Aleknagik | 83.2% | 28.8% |
| Atka | 91.8% | 16.2% |
| Chignik | 45.2% | 0.0% |
| Chignik Lagoon | 56.6% | 6.4% |
| Chignik Lake | 91.7% | 42.0% |
| Clarks Point | 88.3% | 16.1% |
| Cold Bay | 5.4% | 0.0% |

| Location | % Alaska Native | % Below Poverty Level |
|-----------------|------------------------|------------------------------|
| Dillingham | 55.8% | 9.5% |
| Egegik | 70.5% | 34.1% |
| Ekuk | 33.3% | 16.1% |
| Ekwok | 87.0% | 52.0% |
| False Pass | 76.5% | 17.9% |
| Igiugig | 78.8% | 0.0% |
| Iliamna | 66.0% | 12.1% |
| Ivanof Bay | 94.3% | 18.4% |
| Karluk | 91.5% | 3.6% |
| King Cove | 39.2% | 10.0% |
| King Salmon | 15.5% | 3.0% |
| Kodiak | 12.7% | 6.2% |
| Kokhanok | 90.1% | 53.4% |
| Koliganek | 96.1% | 35.6% |
| Larsen Bay | 84.4% | 3.1% |
| Levelock | 82.9% | 25.8% |
| Manokotak | 95.6% | 28.6% |
| Naknek | 41.0% | 1.7% |
| Nelson Lagoon | 80.7% | 26.0% |
| New Stuyahok | 95.9% | 51.0% |
| Newhalen | 94.4% | 22.4% |
| Nikolski | 82.9% | 0.0% |
| Nondalton | 89.3% | 20.3% |
| Old Harbor | 88.7% | 31.5% |
| Ouzinkie | 85.2% | 10.2% |
| Pedro Bay | 90.5% | 21.9% |
| Perryville | 94.4% | 25.4% |

| Location | % Alaska Native | % Below Poverty Level |
|-----------------|------------------------|------------------------------|
| Pilot Point | 84.9% | 12.9% |
| Port Alsworth | 1.8% | 0.0% |
| Port Heiden | 86.0% | 24.3% |
| Port Lions | 67.6% | 5.3% |
| Sand Point | 49.3% | 12.5% |
| Shemya Station | 0.5% | 0.0% |
| South Naknek | 79.4% | 26.3% |
| Togiak | 87.3% | 46.3% |
| Twin Hills | 92.4% | 50.0% |
| Ugashik | 85.7% | 0.0% |
| Unalaska | 8.4% | 15.3% |

Source: Alaska Department of Community and Regional Affairs Community Database. 1990.

TRANSPORTATION LEGISLATION

This section discusses transportation legislation that has a land based environmental protection component that could constrain transportation development and thus could affect transportation alternatives in Southwest Alaska. The two main legislative actions identified are Section 4(f) of the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) Act and Title XI of the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act.

SECTION 4(f)

Section 4(f) of the U.S. Department of Transportation Act states that no administrative approval may be granted for a Department of Transportation action using land from a publicly owned park, recreation area, wildlife and waterfowl refuge, or any significant historic site unless there are no prudent and feasible alternatives to taking this land. In addition to the aforementioned resources, Section 4(f) has been found to apply to Wild and Scenic Rivers and trails of the National Trails System Act. A Section 4(f) evaluation is used to evaluate a range of alternatives when one or more would use Section 4(f) properties. Such an evaluation is used, in particular, to evaluate avoidance of Section 4(f) properties and to determine which alternative and measures to minimize harm should be implemented.

This technical memorandum identifies major state and federal parks, recreation areas, and wildlife and waterfowl refuges that would likely be subject to Section 4(f) and which could impact regional transportation alternatives. This list is not all-inclusive of Section 4(f) resources. Lacking in particular are local parks and historic and cultural sites. However, these sites are unlikely to impact regional transportation alternatives.

ALASKA NATIONAL INTEREST LANDS CONSERVATION ACT (ANILCA)

Title XI of ANILCA provides a process for siting transportation systems through the conservation system units covered by ANILCA. Conservation system units are any Alaska lands in the National Park System, National Wildlife Refuge System, National Wild and Scenic Rivers Systems, National Trails System, National Wilderness Preservation System, or National Forest Monument System.

The approval process required by the Act (Section 1104) requires an application to be filed with each appropriate agency having the authority to grant any authorization. The federal agencies then have 60 days to determine whether or not the application was complete. The draft EIS would be jointly prepared by all agencies with which the application is filed. Title XI modifies the standard NEPA process time line by requiring that a draft EIS be filed by the head of the lead agency within nine months from the date the application was filed. The final EIS is required to be completed within a year of filing. Either of these deadlines may be extended, but such extension would require publication of the reasoning in the *Federal Register*. The records of decision (ROD) of each agency are required within four months of publication of the final EIS. Adhering to these guidelines would result in an EIS with a relatively quick turnaround.

Title XI also modifies the typical NEPA process for areas designated wilderness by elevating the federal decisions from the agencies to the President and Congress (Sec 1106(b)). Title XI provides that each federal agency involved shall submit to the U.S. President “promptly” (presumably at the end of the four-month period required for agency decisions) notification of whether the agency tentatively approves or disapproves each federal authorization and reasons for the decision. Within four months of receiving notification, “the President shall decide whether or not the application for the system concerned should be approved.” If he approves, he sends it on to Congress with a recommendation for approval. If he does not approve, the applicant is considered to have exhausted the administrative process. The project is either canceled or goes to court. If the President sends a recommendation of approval to Congress, the Senate and House of Representatives must approve a joint resolution supporting the project within “the first 120 calendar days of continuous session of the Congress...” If the two houses agree on a joint resolution, then the project goes forward. If they do not, the project is canceled. Section 1106(c)(2) of ANILCA defines “continuous session.”

While the USFWS has dealt with the Title XI provisions in some 30 instances, neither it nor any federal agency has apparently yet tested the Title XI provisions for crossing designated wilderness areas. The closest is an effort currently underway by the Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (DOT&PF) to gain approval for upgrade and realignment of the Sterling Highway in an area that would cross the Resurrection Pass National Recreation Trail and a portion of the Kenai National Wildlife Refuge designated wilderness.

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